



The IGUANA



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JTF-B welcomes new leader

By 2nd Lt. Carla Pampe
Public Affairs Director

Joint Task Force-Bravo said goodbye to their former commander and welcomed a new leader during a change-of-command ceremony Monday.

Col. Raymond A. Thomas III assumed command of JTF-Bravo from Col. Michael C. Okita, who has been assigned as deputy director for operations and plans at Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Va.

The ceremony was attended by several military leaders and distinguished guests including Frank Almaguer, U.S. ambassador to Honduras; Maj. Gen. Gary Speer, acting commander in chief of United States Southern Command; retired Gen. Marco Rosales Abella, Honduran deputy minister of defense; Lt. Col. Gustavo Lanza Lagos, director of the Honduran Military Aviation Academy and Anibal Murillo, governor of La Paz.

Speer, who flew in from Miami for the day, praised the men and women of JTF-Bravo for their hard work and dedication to the mission.

"The men and women of JTF-Bravo have been challenged with a gamut of tasks

... both natural and man-made You have accomplished great things for your nation ... and every one of you has great reason to be proud," Speer said. "JTF-B's impact has been felt in every nation in the region."

In his first speech as commander of JTF-Bravo, Thomas was brief in his comments.

"It's truly a privilege and an honor to assume command of this great task force," he said.

Following the ceremony, Thomas told local media that he was very much looking forward to working closely with the people of Honduras, and experiencing the culture of the country.

Thomas' military career includes experience as platoon leader, scout platoon leader and company executive officer in the 9th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Wash.; plans and liaison officer with the 75th Ranger Regiment and battalion assistant operations officer an Alpha Company commander in the 3rd Ranger Battalion at Fort Benning, Ga.; and aide-de-camp for the commanding general of the Joint Special Operations Command. He also served as troop commander and a squadron operations of-

ficer with the 1st SFOD-Delta at Fort Bragg, N.C. Following attendance at the Naval Command and Staff College at Newport, R.I., he returned to the 2nd Ranger Battalion, where he served as the executive officer. He later attended the United States Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Penn.

Thomas comes to JTF-Bravo from a command position with the 1st Ranger Battalion at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

A native of Philadelphia, Thomas earned his commission in 1980 as a graduate of the United States Military Academy.



Photo by Spc. M. William Petersen

The flags of all the services of JTF-Bravo were present behind the JTF-B and national colors.



Photo by Martin Chahin

Col. Michael C. Okita makes his farewell speech to JTF-B.



Photo by Martin Chahin

Above: Col. Raymond A. Thomas III accepts the colors and the command of Joint Task Force-Bravo during the change of command ceremony July 22. Below: The troops of JTF-B stand in formation to render honors to their outgoing commander, Col. Michael C. Okita, and welcome their new commander.



Photo by Spc. M. William Petersen

Commanders Corner

Accountability All Around

By Lt. Col. Elbert Nieves

J-4 Director

We've been hearing more about accountability lately. It means being responsible; facing consequences for compromising responsibility; holding yourself and holding others responsible for what we have done or failed to do. For the military, accountability is more than just a new buzz, it's how we do business, stay sharp, and distinguish ourselves from the rest.

Every military leader is accountable for themselves, their people, their equipment, and the accomplishment of their mission. Sacrificing one for another reveals a weakness in a leader's structural integrity.

As a logistician, equipment accountability is critical. Directing the logistics operations here at Soto Cano, my focus on equipment accountability has been stronger than ever. With the transient population of soldiers and

airmen, and with the constant incoming and outgoing of the Task Forces from other states and countries we support in operations, such as New Horizons, we must work harder to ensure accountability is being enforced at every level.

It's easy to focus solely on your job or on your people during your short time in this AOR, and then let the "next guy" worry about straightening out the Hand Receipts, Report of Surveys and all other endless documentation that goes along with the task of maintaining accountability.

But handing this important duty off to someone else is a breach in accountability. Sooner or later someone is going to have to answer for a lost or damaged piece of equipment, as well they should. Losing track of equipment, and not doing full and prompt reports on damaged equipment leads to complications in inventory and significant losses in time and money.

Every soldier and airman serving JTF-Bravo is responsible for someone or something, and that responsibility

does not end when their tour is finished here or when their replacement arrives. In today's lean armed forces, any rank and position is coupled with great accountability and responsibility. Accountability is never on leave or back at your homestation. It's as much a part of you as the rank and position you hold. It is our duty to stay on top of all we are responsible for by taking regular inventory, reporting losses and damages, and following up on those reports.

Accountability is a growing concern outside the military as well. You can see it in the recent developments in corporate America. American tempers have been flaring over the "cooked books" some of our largest corporations have been keeping, and getting away with for far too long, at the expense of innocent investors.

We can't do much to reform the wayward ways of corporate America, but we all have the ability to ensure accountability in each of our areas here at JTF-Bravo. So, I put it to you to recognize the importance of accountability. Practice it, enforce it, and live it – all around.

The Chaplain's Corner

Spiritual Fitness

By Chaplain (Capt.) Patrick R. Basal

JTF-Bravo Chaplain

We live in a world of spiraling moral decay. We search for answers to life's questions — looking for absolutes and sustaining values from the world around us.

We talk and train physical, mental and emotional fitness on PT fields, ranges and in the classroom, while blotters, Article 15s, disputes, adulteries, divorces, thefts, various abuses and suicides are all common business.

Spiritual fitness is the development of those personal qualities needed to sustain a person in times of stress, hardship, and tragedy. These qualities come from religious values and form the basis for character, disposition, decision-making and integrity.

This definition presupposes that visible action stems from our spiritual health and comes from our set of values. But, spiritual fitness goes beyond memorization of lists of values and codes of conduct. While the Army Core Values are good — loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage — they are not instilled in us in our very being.

Only you can create the environment for its roots, by what you do, say, think, read and watch. "For physical training is of some value, but godliness (spiritual fitness) has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." — 1 Timothy 4:8.

A spiritually fit person recognizes there are multiple dimensions that make up the human being. He or she seeks to develop the total person concept. When your actions are different from your stated values, you live with inner conflict. This is what Martin Luther the great reformer referred to as "the abrasion of the godless world." The term abrasion means a constant wearing away at something until it is slowly altered or eroded to the point of no effect.

tiveness. You struggle for integrity and congruity, but cannot find inner peace until this struggle is dealt with. The extent to which this is resolved is a measure of spiritual fitness.

Modern history proves over and over the values of spiritually fit soldiers to unit readiness. During Vietnam, the deeply spiritual soldier was not high on drugs, drunk in the gutter, or at sick call for sexually transmitted diseases. They had a purpose for living and an inner confidence when faced with death. Dave Roeber was a Navy Seal and Brown Water Sailor who epitomizes the spiritually fit soldier. While burned beyond recognition by a phosphorus grenade his survival and life is a miracle, which displays God's love to those who make spiritual fitness a priority in their lives.

In Desert Storm, basic morality mandated by a foreign government and combined with a flourishing spiritual fitness program at the unit level, produced an unbeatable readiness machine on the battlefield.

In garrison, truly spiritually fit soldiers are not your weak link, they are the strongest — tried and tested everyday by those around them. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." — Proverbs 3:5,6.

"The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in an American army, is growing into fashion. (As well as chewing tobacco) and he hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect, that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms, if we insult it by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it." — General George Washington, July 1776.

PAX DOMINE (The Peace of the Lord)

SUBMISSIONS

The Iguana is always looking for submissions. Any articles, photos or letters to be submitted to The Iguana can be sent to the editor at michael.petersen@jtfb.southcom.mil or delivered to the Public Affairs Office, bldg. D-06. If you have any questions regarding possible submissions call ext. 4660 or 4676.

The

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IN THE DOOR WITH JUMPMASTERS



Staff Sgt. Felix Reyes, a parachute rigger and experienced jumpmaster, guides Airborne troops from Honduras and the United States through the door of a C-130 during the July 17 Airborne jump.



Hooked up to the static line, a Honduran paracadista makes his way to the door manned by Maj. Niklas Putnam, jumpmaster, and Maj. Alan D. Katz, safety. A safety serves as both assistant jumpmaster and inspector of the aircraft and gear.

Story and Photos by
Spc. M. William Petersen
Editor

The thick mist from the cooling system made it impossible to see the opposite side of the C-130. Vague silhouettes shifted on the troop seats as the aircraft climbed into the Honduran skies. At altitude the mist cleared, and from the looks on the faces of the paratroopers, Honduran and American, one could gather the emotions of an aircraft full of men about to step out the door from thousands of feet up.

On the faces of younger troops, there could be found a mixture of enthusiasm and nerves. Some smiled almost maniacally with the excitement of the impending jump. Others looked to be in deep thought.

On the faces of the more experienced troops, however, was a strange calm. They had been here before. They knew what to worry about and what to leave in the capable hands of the jumpmasters.

While the paratroopers waited for the moment to stand up, hook up and walk to the door for the green light, the jumpmasters were in a constant state of focus. The intensity in their eyes as they inspected every detail, both on the ground and in the air, never once wavered. The lives of the jumpers were in their hands; every detail could mean the difference between a safe landing and tragedy.

Two jumpmasters manned each door on the C-130 during the morning jump July 17. On the left door of the aircraft stood two jumpmasters, one serving as safety.

Staff Sgt. Felix Reyes has spent seven of his 16 years in the Army as a jumpmaster. With 12 years as an Airborne soldier, he's seen his share of high-altitude exits. As primary jumpmaster manning the door, he seems comfortable hanging into the wind. It wasn't always that way, though.

"In jumpmaster school, the door was the scariest thing. Going up and hanging out, I was thinking, 'I hope I don't get pulled out while sticking my head out there,'" said Reyes.

The training to become a jumpmaster is a

three-week course that requires at least the rank of corporal and a minimum 12 jumps. The course, which stresses extreme attention to detail and hands-on experience, can have a high wash-out rate according to Reyes' safety for the jump and fellow jumpmaster, Staff Sgt. Larry Salcido. Salcido has eight of his 11 years in as an Airborne soldier. He trained as a jumpmaster nearly two years ago.

"You'll start the class with around 80 people," said Salcido. "You'll be lucky to finish with 50. There's lots of hands-on work and attention to detail. It gets very technical. You have to have a hawk's eye to find things that are wrong."

Once through training, the jumpmaster's role becomes even more difficult. Once the door is theirs, the jumpmasters become responsible for every soldier on the aircraft. Jumpers can sometimes number more than 100. What runs through a jumpmaster's mind as those soldiers approach the door?

"All I'm doing is checking every troop, making sure every line is hooked up, making sure everything is in the right spot," said Reyes. "It means I have to be thinking about everything and making sure everyone works together and can react to anything."

"You'll know a good jumpmaster by the way they talk about Airborne operations. He never takes shortcuts in his duties," said Salcido. "I always try to see how much experience they have."

For Reyes and Salcido, the responsibility, training and dedication it takes to be a jumpmaster are worth the effort.

"You're a soldier 24 hours a day. When you're identified to perform jumpmaster duties, you put on a different hat," said Salcido. "You have a whole new set of responsibilities."

"It's a good duty," Reyes added. "You have to be on top of everything that's going on in the Airborne community. It makes you feel good, too, because not everyone makes it."

At the end of the day, all 29 jumpers made it safely to the ground at Tamara drop zone, followed close behind by the jumpmasters who got them there.



Staff Sgt. Larry Salcido, safety for the jump, checks a Honduran paracadista's gear.



Specialist Joseph Quintero (left), OR technician, assists as Dr. (Maj.) Bernard Kopchinski (second from left), general surgeon at Soto Cano, and Jose Angel Mejia (second from right), chief of surgery at St. Theresa hospital in Comayagua perform a hernia repair on a woman. Maj. Daniel McKay (center back), certified nurse anesthetist, and OR nurse Maj. Javier Altamirano (right) were also part of the team from Soto Cano who performed five surgeries July 17.

Surgical team makes difference

Story and Photo by 2nd Lt. Carla Pampe

Public Affairs Director

One of the main missions of Joint Task Force Bravo is facilitating major medical exercises throughout Central America several times a year.

On a smaller scale, however, a team from Soto Cano's medical element is making a big difference every week here in the local community.

Members of the MEDEL surgical team do medical missions in Comayagua and La Paz twice a week.

"[The team] consists of the surgeon, certified nurse anesthetist, operating room registered nurse, and an operating room technician," said Maj. Daniel McKay, certified nurse anesthetist. "We go to St. Teresa in Comayagua on Mondays and usually to the hospital in La Paz on Thursdays."

In addition to the MEDEL staff, the team brings along a liaison officer to help with translations. The team performs between two and six surgeries each day, depending on the types of cases, and patients range in age from 2 months to more than 70 years old. The team works together with a surgeon from the hospital they're visiting, and while the majority of the cases are fairly simple procedures like hernia repairs, gallbladder removals and circumcisions, the team does assist in more difficult cases as well.

McKay said there are a number of reasons why the team from Soto Cano does these missions.

"These trips allow the personnel assigned to the OR to congeal as a team. We get to know each others' strengths and weaknesses, which is critical to our success if and when life-saving trauma surgery is required at MEDEL. Truly having a surgical team that works smoothly together can make the difference in saving a life or not," he said.

General surgeon Dr. (Maj.) Bernard Kopchinski agrees.

"Going downtown is a wonderful opportunity for us," he said. "It allows us to maintain our operating skills, and, at the same time, we're learning techniques from the local surgeons who do a lot with virtually nothing. It's amazing what they're able to accomplish with the limited infrastructure that's in place."

For the hospitals the MEDEL team visits, the benefits are many, said Dr. Jose Angel Mejia, head of the surgical department at St. Theresa.

"They support us with human resources, materials and paramedical staff, which is lacking very much in our institution,"

Mejia said.

He added he would love for the team to be able to come more than twice a week, "but for those days they come we are very grateful, and for that reason we want to open this up to the rest of the medical staff at Soto Cano."

In addition to providing assistance to the local hospital staffs, another reason for the surgical missions is the exchange of ideas, techniques and skills, McKay said.

"We have held two training seminars during my time here for the nurses of Honduras," he said. "The exchange of ideas between health professionals provides some of the best, most long-lasting education in our fields of expertise."

Mejia agreed that both sides learn things from each other, and added it is an excellent opportunity to build friendships between Honduran and American medical professionals.

"I've had the opportunity to work with two surgeons from Soto Cano, Dr. Dave Pearson and Dr. Bernard Kopchinski. It's been an excellent working relationship," he said. "They are very professional, and also a friendship has ensued."

Another benefit local hospitals receive from the surgery team is medical supplies.

"In addition to educational gains on both sides, we bring supplies to the Honduran hospitals which are non-existent. These supplies are used during the course of surgery we perform or assist with and would be otherwise discarded when they reach their expiration dates," McKay said.

Mejia said these supplies are critical to St. Theresa.

"Comayagua desperately needs a lot of help from Soto Cano," Mejia added. "We would like to increase the human and material help we receive from the base, because we're a very needy population."

Although the training, exchange of ideas and medical supplies provided are important, Kopchinski said the most important reason for the surgery trips is the people.

"This allows us to go downtown and assist the staff at the hospitals, and also enhance the medical care of the local population," he said. "You see the looks on the patients' faces when we walk in there, and they really appreciate the help."

McKay agrees.

"We are always warmly greeted by the staff and patients," he said.

"These doctors, nurses and OJT-trained assistants perform miraculous surgeries with minimal support and few complications," he added. "They allow us to operate at their facilities for the opportunity to learn other methods and to teach us their techniques. It is a mutually beneficial arrangement."

Former JTF-B commander bids farewell

Shortly after arriving at Joint Task Force-Bravo, I published two documents that I felt would be instrumental in shaping the future of the Task Force. The Command Philosophy memorandum provided vision and guidelines useful for the execution of our daily mission. The second document, the Fiscal Year 2002 Command Operating Guidance, served as an azimuth for the development of a JTF force capable of meeting theater-wide 21st Century challenges.

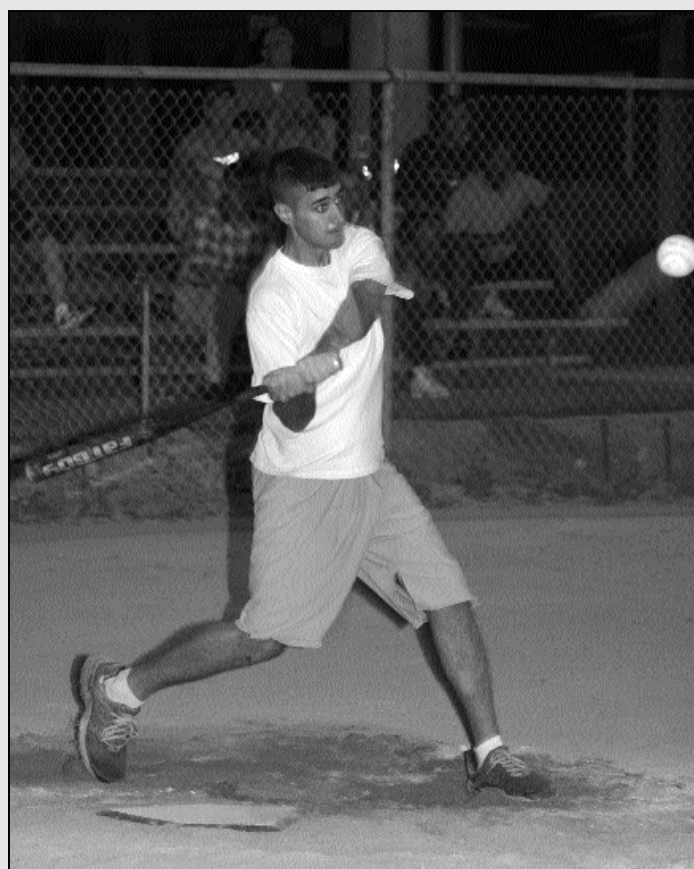
As I recall the yearlong accomplishments of our organization, I can't help but return to those two memorandums to assess the progress we have made. A year's growth is realized because of your selfless service and teamwork. Each of you has contributed to the positive image of the JTF through your personal example, discipline and mission focus. Your units remain ready to meet every tasking, planned or contingency, that is presented to you — a credit to the readiness posture you diligently adhere to.

We all recognize that life in this era of globalization, where boundaries of nationalism are ill-defined, creates new force protection challenges. I applaud the energy and commitment that you bring to our remote posting that ensures our lives and those of the people we have sworn to defend are protected every day.

What excites me most about the past is the future. (Is that a Yogi-ism?) You have built a foundation for the JTF that makes the unit increasingly relevant to our senior leaders throughout the Defense Department while maintaining maximum flexibility to respond to humanitarian and civic crises across the region. The approval of Central Champs 2002, a terrific milestone in the JTF's history, will expand the mission profile of the Task Force and bring in additional resources to enhance operational capability and add to the quality of life for all residents of the JTF.

I am encouraged by the strength of leadership, the personal discipline, courage and commitment displayed across the organization. Because of what you bring to the JTF, I leave Honduras with great confidence that no matter your task, each mission will be accomplished with great success. As many suggested when I first arrived, "the year will go by quickly". It has; in the past 12 months I have been enriched by all of you — soldiers, airmen, marines, civilians, my professional colleagues at State and many friends throughout Honduras — this is the great reward of command and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve along side you!

AFFOR defends softball title



Photos by 2nd Lt. Carla Pampe

Nathan Hanson of the MEDEL softball team takes a monster swing. MEDEL lost to reigning champs, AFFOR, 25-14.

By Tech. Sgt. G. A. Volb

JTF-Bravo Public Affairs

AFFOR's 11-0 softball season culminated recently with a 25-14 victory over MEDEL for the crown.

It was the second straight season AFFOR has gone undefeated in running down the softball championship — their last defeat coming nearly eight months ago.

Versus MEDEL, AFFOR jumped out to a quick 8-0 lead in the first behind walks and key hits. By the fourth inning, however, MEDEL had scraped their way back into the game 12-9.

The fifth saw AFFOR's bats come alive again: Vince Swanson and James Page unloaded back-to-back shots to open an 18-9 lead. MEDEL responded with two of their own before returning to their earlier strategy of walking AFFOR's big bats in the seventh.

It backfired though as, with the bases jammed; Page once again delivered — a grand slam this time pacing AFFOR's seven-run seventh. MEDEL added three cosmetic runs in their half of the inning to complete the scoring 25-14.

AFFOR coach James Clark attributed the success to their offense: "We had a solid defense, but without question it was our offense that carried us throughout the season. Even when the power hitters were getting intentionally walked, the

rest of the team hit the ball very well and the runs kept rolling in."

The meat of the offense, according to Clark, was three long-ball threats — Swanson, Page and Clay Abbott. "All could go deep any time they entered the batter's box," he said.

He added that a late addition to the infield, Page, not only offered a reliable glove but also some protection in the batting order for the other big hitters.

"His defense has been pretty good and even with the bad hops we get on this infield, he sticks in there and isn't afraid to give up the body," said Clark. "Just looking at him you can tell that's been his philosophy his whole career."

The 11-0 year wasn't without a few challenges, yet Clark said he had confidence his team could make up any deficits — and did.



The champion AFFOR team poses with their prize.

Been there? Maybe not yet...

By Robin Gonzalez

MWR Manager

In your time at Soto Cano, you've taken advantage of what Honduras has to offer through MWR tours, travels with friends, or as part of an official trip. So, time is winding down for you and soon you will be winging your way back to your home base or a new assignment somewhere in the world. Because of the many opportunities to get off base, you figure you've "been there, done that, and bought the T-shirt," and there's nothing much, if anything, left to see or do in Honduras.

Well, have you been to the 16th century Spanish fortress (Castillo) at Omoa? How about a day trip to the Pico Bonito rain forest? What about Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge near La Ceiba reached only via the old banana train route and boat? And on the Pacific coast of

Honduras, have you visited Amapala, Tiger Island or Choluteca (the only major Honduran city on the Pan American highway)? No? Then what about Lancetilla botanical gardens (one of the largest in the world, located at the entrance to Tela), horseback riding in the mountains at Marcala, white water rafting at La Ceiba, snorkeling at Cayos Cochinos, swimming with the dolphins at Anthony's Key, Roatan, or sailing the waters around Roatan and Utila? You have? Then maybe you need to add the two major cathedrals in Tegucigalpa and the one in Comayagua, the hot springs at Copan, Danti's cigar factory, Pullapanzak Falls, El Cusuco national cloud forest park, Las Sepulturas archaeological site, Garifuna villages, Guamilito Market, butterfly farms, Sawdust carpet displays, Cristo del Picacho concrete statue, and shrimp farms to your list.

Does "been there, done that" include La Casa de las Abuelas, the casinos in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Su-

la, drinks by the pool at the Gran Hotel Sula, candle light dinner at Ricardo's, driving to Oak Harbor, enjoying the all-inclusive Barcelo Palma Real Resort, swimming with the whale sharks, or "shopping til you drop" in Copan? No? Last chance; Hotel Plaza San Martin's Happy Hour snacks, Copantl's Olympic sized pool, fresh-caught lobster at Fantasy Island, moonlight walks at West End, golf (both flat and "hilly"), getting away from it all at the Hacienda San Lucas, pedal boating on the El Jiral lagoon, bass fishing, or enjoying fresh baked coconut bread at Hotel Playa?

Still say you have already seen all these sights, been to all these places, and taken advantage of all these options? Then you truly have seen Honduras! If, on the other hand, there are names, activities, and/or locations that are unfamiliar to you, then stop by MWR Tours and Travel in the Recreation Center, H-401, and let us show you the many sights of Honduras.

Correction

In the July 12 edition of the Iguana, Lt. Col. Richard Hilburn's name was misspelled in the MEDEL change of command headline and cutline. The staff of the Iguana strives to provide an accurate and professional product, and sincerely regrets this error.

Coleman Company announces recall of mosquito traps

The Coleman Company Inc., of Wichita, Kan., is voluntarily recalling about 136,000 Mosquito Deleto™ Traps. The mosquito trap's propane regulator can leak propane or allow an overflow of propane gas, both of which pose a fire hazard to consumers.

In addition, the fuel hose attachment sold with the Back Home™ System can become damaged and leak propane, which poses a fire hazard to consumers. Coleman has received 28 reports of traps melting or catching on fire as a result of propane leaking, and 7 reports of damage to the propane fuel hoses. No injuries have been reported.

Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr. laid to rest

Pioneering Tuskegee Airman honored at Arlington



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Jim Varhegyi

U.S. Air Force Honor Guard body bearers carry the remains of Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr. during his full honors funeral at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C., July 17, 2002. Davis died July 4 at age 89.

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez

Special to the American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Friends, family, military and retired military members gathered today to pay tribute and to lay to rest an Air Force pioneer.

Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the first African-American Air Force general, was remembered in a memorial service at the Bolling Air Force Base Chapel here. After the ceremony, he was buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Davis died July 4 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center of natural causes. He was 89.

Alan Gropman, chairman of the Grand Strategy Department at National Defense University here, delivered the eulogy. Many of those in attendance wore the distinctive red jackets of the Tuskegee Airmen — members of the units Davis commanded during and after World War II.

"Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr. is an American hero," Gropman said. "We call those who demonstrate physical courage heroes because they risk their lives for something bigger than themselves."

"General Davis risked his life for his nation and for his people. He believed all his adult life in racial integration and thought he could bring this essential reform to America once World War II began. If he demonstrated blacks could fly and fight and lead with the same skill and courage as whites, a notion foreign to white America of

1941, he believed he could destroy the myth of racial inferiority. "The Tuskegee Airman shared his vision and courage, and he and they succeeded."

Davis' nephew, Judge L. Scott Melville, spoke on the attributes of respect, dignity and honor, and how Davis worked to earn them.

"Black men, brown men, yellow men, red men and women of all colors could not acquire those attributes through birth. ... They had to earn them," Melville said. "Ben understood these rules of American politics, and he was determined to overcome them. Not by demonstrating, not by de-

nouncing, not by complaining, not by whining, but by succeeding."

At Arlington National Cemetery, as is military tradition, a horse pulled Davis' casket on a caisson to the gravesite. Tuskegee Airmen served as honorary pallbearers.

During the Arlington service, the Air Force honor guard rendered the time-honored courtesies to a hero

passed: a cannon salute, a lone bugler playing taps and the passing of the American flag to the next of kin.

Davis' memory was also honored with a heritage flyover, including a vintage P-51 Mustang painted in the Tuskegee Airmen's flying colors, F-16 Fighting Falcons and F-15 Eagles. The fliers paid tribute to their fallen comrade and leader with a missing man formation, traditionally reserved for military aviators killed in the line of duty.

Davis' survivors include his sister, Elnora D. McLendon, and many nieces and nephews.



A heritage flight consisting of two P-51 Mustang fighters (center), an F-16 (left) and an F-15 pay tribute to Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr.

Chinese military power secret, but growing

By Spc. Pete M. Williamsen

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – A report to Congress detailing the military power of the People's Republic of China is filled with words and phrases like "approximately," "roughly," "likely" and "is believed to be."

This is because despite tremendous strides in economic growth, the Chinese government is still extremely secretive and opaque about military matters.

"The official Chinese military budget is \$20 billion," said a defense official. "But the actual money invested could be as much as four or five times greater. The \$20 billion is just a start."

Very little is really known not only about finance, but also about capabilities. Military-to-military exchanges between the United States and the People's Republic are another example of the secrecy the Chinese exhibit. "In the past, we have shown Chinese counterparts U.S. capabilities," said the official. "When we went for reciprocal visits, we saw only showcase units. We didn't see any operational training exercises."

The Chinese have one of the most vibrant economies in the world, growing at about 8 percent each year. Chinese leaders have committed to a long-range plan to improve military capabilities. According to the annual report to Congress, military modernization is behind other priorities such as development in agriculture, indus-

try, science and technology. The report states this is done with the idea that improvements in these areas would necessarily improve the long-term status of the Chinese military.

However, preparing for a potential conflict in the Taiwan Strait is the primary driver for China's military modernization, and the focus is on reunifying with Taiwan on Beijing's terms, according to the report. The People's Republic wants to stop further moves by Taiwan toward independence.

"Beijing assesses that the permanent separation of Taiwan from the mainland could serve as a strategic foothold for the United States," the report states. "At the same time, securing control over Taiwan would allow (the People's Republic of China) to move its defensive perimeter further seaward."

The report says the growth of the Chinese military is aimed at a "coercive" approach to Taiwan. The People's Republic has repeatedly stated it will resort to force against Taiwan if the island declares independence.

The long-term Chinese goal is to modernize the military with "homegrown" capabilities. To that aim, the government has dedicated much money to research and development. In the meantime, the Chinese military has upgraded capabilities through arms sales.

Russia is the largest foreign supplier to the People's Republic. Russia has sold state-of-the-art Su-30 jet fighters to the Chinese as well as Sovremenny-class de-

BRIEFS

New Ramp Designations

With immediate effect Soto Cano AB ramp designations are changed to read as followed:

- Delta Ramp is now Foxtrot Ramp
- Charlie Ramp is now Golf Ramp
- Bravo South Ramp is now Hotel South Ramp
- Bravo North Ramp is now Hotel North Ramp
- Alpha Ramp is now India Ramp
- Zulu Ramp is now Juliet Ramp

All taxiways designations remain the same. All questions should be directed to the Airfield Manager at ext. 6235.

View Travel Payments on H-Drive

The Finance Office is now posting all travel voucher settlements to the "JTF-B data" folder on the network. Travel settlements filed after 8 July 2002 will be logged. Monitor the status of your travel payments by going to H:\ARFOR\FINANCE\Travel Payments Log.xls.

New Legal Office hours

Due to a shortage in personnel, the Office of the Command Judge Advocate (Legal Office) is reducing hours that legal assistance will be available. Until further notice, all powers of attorney and notarizations will be processed Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. People unable to make those times or seeking other legal services must make an appointment. Notification will be distributed when this policy is no longer necessary.

Ten Miler team tryouts

A 10 kilometer run will be held Aug. 29 at 6 a.m. to select the members of the JTF-B team that will go to Washington D.C. to race in the Army Ten Miler on Oct. 20.

The run will start and finish in the vicinity of the track. Eight personnel will comprise the team.

Sign-up forms will be available soon so T-shirts can be ordered.

All are invited to run and encouraged to participate.

Mosquito fogging

Mosquito fogging will be increased to twice weekly. In addition to Saturday, mosquito fogging will be conducted every Tuesday at 5:30 a.m. beginning tomorrow on Soto Cano.

Avoid unnecessary activity on main roads during this time on these days.

Camp Delta chow is all "halal"

By Rudi Williams

American Forces Press Service

GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba — "The hotter the food, the better they like it." But Navy mess specialist Chief Petty Officer Colleen M. Schonhoff said preparing spicy hot food for the Muslim detainees here at Camp Delta isn't her major concern.

"We have to make sure that the food is halal approved," said Schonhoff, overseer of the galleys at Guantanamo Bay that feed the detainees and U.S. service members. "Meats for the detainees have to be handled a certain way under Muslim requirements. When I order meat for military people, I just say I want 50 pounds of chicken, and it doesn't matter how that chicken has been handled as long as it's USDA approved. For the Muslims, I have to have a certificate from the company that says it's halal

approved. I'm required to keep the certificate on file in case I'm ever questioned."

For instance, a certificate of Islamic slaughter must accompany every shipment of meat for the detainees. The Islamic Services of America must certify that the meat is halal beef that was handled according to all Islamic slaughter procedures and guidelines.

Muslims use two terms to describe food - halal and haram. Halal is an Arabic word, which means lawful or allowed, but it is sometimes translated as acceptable or not forbidden. Haram means the opposite - unlawful or prohibited.

Halal foods are foods that are permitted for consumption under Islamic law. It is sinful for a Muslim to

consume haram foods.

Haram foods include pigs, dogs, donkeys, monkeys, cats, lions, frogs, crocodiles and turtles. Alcohol, harmful substances, poisonous and intoxi-

cating plants or drinks are also haram.

"My main goal was to make sure they got all the nutrition requirements they need — proteins, vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates," Sporrer said. "I had to look at the budget, too, so it's primarily a vegetarian diet, rice, beans, fruit and vegetables. They're getting almost everything they need from two meals a day."

A typical breakfast consists of pita bread, rice, curried eggs and peas, milk and fresh fruit, or hash browns, pita bread, a boiled egg, milk and fresh fruit. A typical dinner consists of rice, pita bread, meat and vegetable curry, milk, fresh fruit and margarine. JTF 160 provides the lunch vegetarian MREs.

Schonhoff said purchasing meat for the detainees is much like buying kosher meat, "except you're buying halal-approved meat that's blessed by a Muslim chaplain before it's slaughtered."

Schonhoff said when she arrived at Gitmo about three years ago, it was a quiet little duty station with one galley. That ended with the detainees' arrival.

"Before the big influx of detainees and troops, we fed about 300 meals a day," she noted. "Then we went to more than 3,800 meals a day and were still doing it out of Quick Hall. We shipped containers of food all around the base."



A civilian cook helps prepare food for Muslim detainees at Camp Delta.

CHINA

Continued from Page 6

stroyers and very quiet diesel submarines. The report says that the equipment coming in from other nations of the former Soviet Union allow the Chinese to reverse-engineer more modern weapons and systems.

Years ago, it was a given that the People's Liberation Army was a good force, but was only effective as far as it could walk, said a DoD official. That is changing. The PLA has been cut dramatically, freeing up money for modernization and allowing the remaining forces to train to higher standards. Money from various accounts outside the official budget is going into modernization.

China is building and designing its own weapons systems. The Chinese military is building homegrown destroyers, frigates and submarines. U.S. officials expect the expertise to grow and the systems to become more sophisticated. As that happens, officials expect the purchase of foreign arms will drop.

Areas of significant growth in the People's Republic's military include:

Missiles — the Chinese have about 350 short-range ballistic missiles, and this is growing by about 50 per year. China is also replacing its ICBM force with longer-range versions.

Air power — China has bought Su-30 fighter aircraft from Russia and is producing the Russian Su-27 jet. China is also beefing up the capabilities of the locally produced F-7 fighter-bomber. The Chinese have developed an airborne early warning aircraft and is looking to buy the A-50 Mainstay AWACS plane from Russia. Training for aviation assets is getting more realistic, the report says.

Naval forces — China has replaced its World War II era landing ships with about 600 military and civilian landing craft. China has bought Russian destroyers and a Kilo-class diesel submarine.

Land forces — China has upgraded the main gun on more than 1,000 tanks and will continue to effort. At the same time, China expects to field 1,800 new Type 96 tanks by 2005. The PLA is also working on improving amphibious tactics and equipment.

U.S. officials say Chinese secrecy is disturbing, but not surprising. They say this secrecy continues a long tradition and fits in with new strategic decisions.

Ethnic fighting stops for bomb

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — An Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II dropped a 500-pound bomb as a show of force in the province of Nangarhar in Afghanistan, Combined Joint Task Force 180 officials said.

Two Afghan groups were engaged in fighting near a U.S. special operations camp. No U.S. service members were involved with the fighting, which seemed to be between two rival factions.

"The U.S. forces were in the area and observed the fighting," said a Defense Department spokesman.

Personnel at the base called on the A-10 to drop a bomb on an unoccupied area near the groups. There were no casualties from the American bomb.

U.S. officials said the strike had the intended effect: The Afghan factions stopped fighting and left the area.

Press reports from the area said that one Afghan died and six were wounded in the fighting.

Nangarhar is east of Kabul right on the border with Pakistan.



“A sacrifice for country...”

Paradise awaits hours from base

Story and Photos by Tech. Sgt. G. A. Volb
JTF-Bravo Public Affairs

There are benefits to any assignment, whether in the continental United States or in remote areas like Honduras.

Here, the benefits include an inexpensive cost of living, travel opportunities, unique living arrangements and an MWR program second to none.

Within a few hours of the base, by car or plane, there are several exotic locations members of the Soto Cano community can venture to: Copan, Roatan, and Lake Yojoa are just a few. Each is made available through the base Morale, Welfare and Recreation office at prices that would beg the question, "How do they stay in business?"

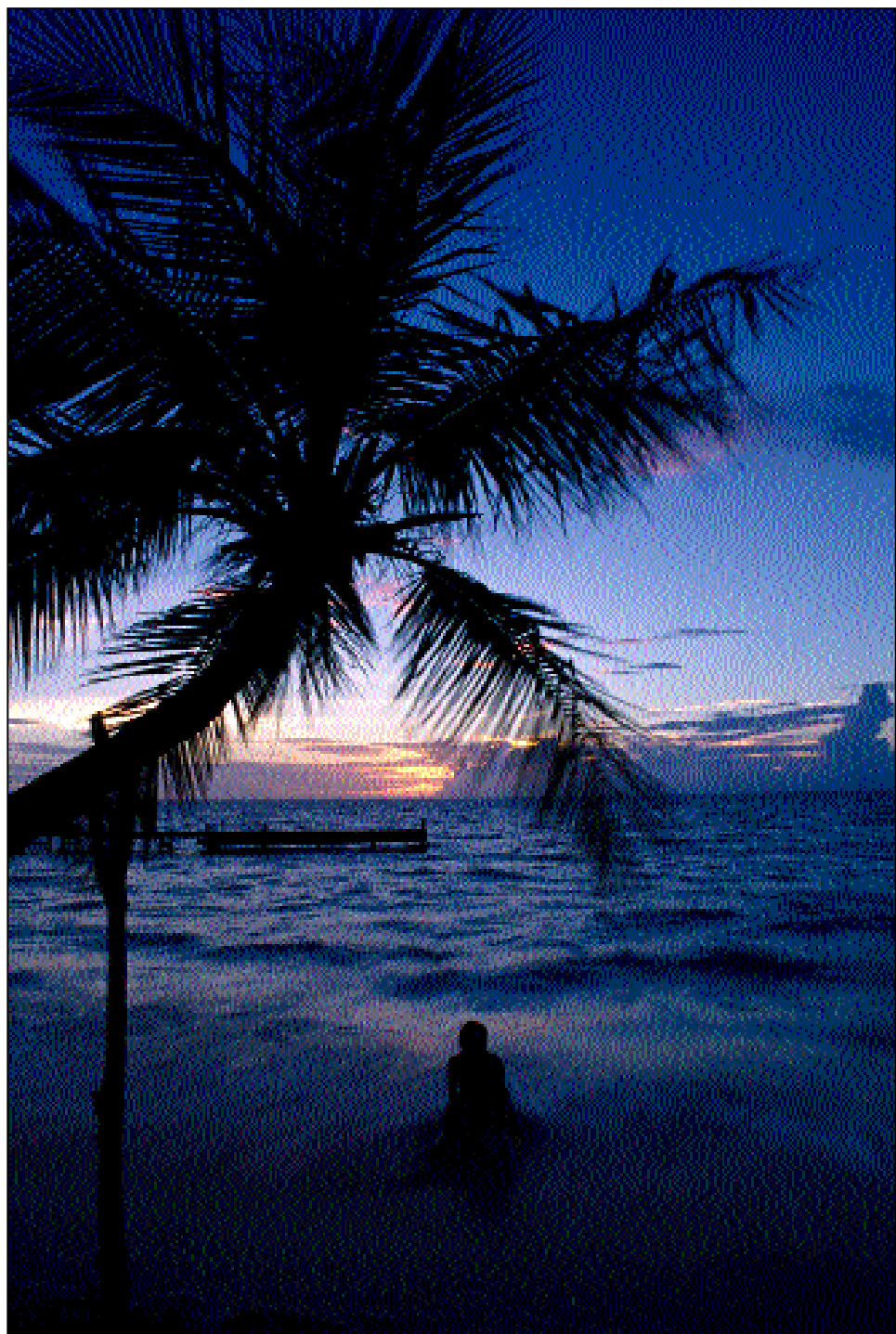
And rest assured, resorts, hotels and other destinations are checked out by members of the MWR staff before "recommending" them to customers. But no stay here would be complete without seeing at least the big three mentioned earlier.

Copan: Located just five hour's drive away, is a must see. Spend a day climbing over the Mayan ruins and wonder how they built such awesome structures so long ago. Take several rolls of film to document your stay.

Roatan: Fly or travel by bus, but either way you're less than six hours from beautiful beaches and sunny weather - normally. An inexpensive beach resort island, you have a choice of many oceanside locations and some further inland. Check out: <http://www.roatanet.com/>; <http://www.topbnbs.com/honduras.html>; or <http://www.honduras.com/> for ideas. Then do a little research: what are you most interested in -- photography, swimming, scuba diving or just relaxing among the palm trees? Make reservations early to ensure you get the accommodations you want.

Lake Yojoa: Just a 90-minute drive from Soto Cano, the MWR approved recreation area on the lake offers boats and jet skis, plus comfortable accommodations at a good price. The lake is just a short drive from Yojoa waterfalls. Take plenty of film, as you could spend a day at the falls by itself.

For more information give Hilda Dominguez or Esly Rodriguez a call at ext. 4268. Normally, you have to sign up by midday Wednesday for any trip.



Top left: A silhouette of a visitor to Lake Yajoa and the MWR approved resort. The lake is just an hour and a half by car from Soto Cano. Rooms are inexpensive, and there are boats and jet skis available to rent for visitors. Above: Roatan Island, just off the coast of Honduras, offers great beaches, great prices and a chance to get away from the pace of the base. At left: Yojoa waterfalls is a short ride up the road from the lake. Visitors can spend several hours walking the river, shooting photos of the scenery and swimming. Center left: A typical beach scene on Roatan Island.